

I am seriously concerned with the potential negative impacts of H.R. 3475 introduced by Sam Johnson (R-Texas). Because of tax fraud and other abuses of the publicly available Death Master File (DMF) and the associated Social Security Death Index (SSDI), the bill, according to Rep Johnson's press release, would "would stop Social Security from making this information public."

This would harm legitimate research such as for:

- Family medical history in tracing inherited conditions,
- Associating DNA of dead soldiers with the correct family,
- Helping coroners find next of kin,
- Use as a tool by credit reporting agencies, merchants, and private investigators,
- A data asset available to over nine million genealogy hobbyists.

There are many legitimate public research uses of the DMF and the SSDI. The data aids in resolving probate issues, in finding relatives, and in working genealogy. Congress should investigate methods of improving the documentation of reported deaths. The Internal Revenue Service should verify that Social Security Numbers belong to individuals old enough to legally work and that SSNs do not belong to individuals previously reported as youthful family members in previous years. Institutions in the commercial sector must make better use of the data available to them.